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ACTION SCT-02

INFO	LOG-00	ADS-00	AID-00	INR-05	SS-00	EB-05	DODE-00
	NSCE-00	ARA-00	NSAE-00	COME-00	SSO-00	L-02	AMAD-01
	TRSE-00	PM-05	PA-02	CCO-00	INRE-00	CA-02	FAA-00
	USSS-00	USIE-00	JUSE-01	FBIE-00	OC-02	FAIM-01	DS-01
	DSE-00	/029 W					

-----366222 302308Z /38
O 302305Z SEP 86
FM AMEMBASSY BOGOTA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 1610
USCINCSO QUARRY HEIGHTS PN PRIORITY
INFO DEA WASHDC
AMEMBASSY PANAMA
CIA WASHDC
USOFFICE ATO MIAMI

C O N F I D E N T I A L BOGOTA 13934

TERREP

PANAMA FOR ADS

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PTER, ASEC, OPET, CO
SUBJECT: ELN EXPANDS/ATTACKS ON/OIL PIPELINES ✓

REF: (A) BOGOTA 11711, (B) BOGOTA 10139 (C) BOGOTA 9746

1. SUMMARY: EMBASSY HAS CONFIRMED -- WITH CHEVRON REPRESENTATIVES IN BOGOTA -- 30 SEPTEMBER PRESS REPORT THAT OVER 100 GUERRILLAS OF THE NATIONAL LIBERATION ARMY (ELN) HAD ATTACKED A CHEVRON-OWNED PETROLEUM SUBSTATION IN NORTHERN SANTANDER. DAMAGE IS ESTIMATED AT US 2 - 2.5 MILLION DOLLARS. THE RIO ZULIA FIELD AND PIPELINE HAVE BEEN CLOSED DOWN. CHEVRON SAYS IT WILL PROBABLY CLOSE ITS RIO ZULIA FIELDS PERMANENTLY. END SUMMARY.
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2. THE SEPTEMBER 28 ATTACK ON A CHEVRON SUBSTATION ON THE RIO ZULIA PIPELINE DAMAGED ONE OF THREE CRUDE HOLDING TANKS, DESTROYED 2 MAJOR PIPELINE PUMPS, THE 2

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF STATE
REVIEW AUTHORITY: OSCAR J. OLSON
DATE/CASE ID: 24 OCT 2002 200201334

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COMPRESSORS USED IN CRUDE EXTRACTION, THE GENERATOR, AND THE RADIO, SERVING THE RIO ZULIA FIELD. IT DID NOT RESULT IN LOSS OF LIFE. THE ATTACK OCCURRED EARLY IN THE MORNING PRIOR TO THE ARRIVAL OF THE 30 OR SO EMPLOYEES WHO WORK THERE. THE PIPELINE, CAPABLE OF MOVING 20,000 BPD OF CRUDE HAS BEEN TOTALLY SHUT DOWN. OF THE THREE, 30,000 BARREL STORAGE TANKS LOCATED AT THE SITE, THE ONE ATTACKED AND DAMAGED (3 INCH HOLE IN THE CASING) WAS VIRTUALLY EMPTY AT THE TIME OF THE ATTACK PREVENTING A MAJOR OIL SPILL.

3. THE MACHINERY DESTROYED IN THE ATTACK IS NOT AVAILABLE IN COLOMBIA. JOSE VICENTE ROJAS, MANAGER OF CHEVRON OPERATIONS IN COLOMBIA SAID THAT IN LIGHT OF THE COST OF THE REPAIRS INVOLVED IN BRINGING THE FIELD BACK ON STREAM (AND GIVEN THE SHORT REMAINING PRODUCTION LIFE OF THE FIELD), THE PROBABILITY OF CLOSING THE FIELD IS NEAR CERTAIN.

4. THE RIO ZULIA FIELD PRODUCES A WAXY LIGHT CRUDE (42 GRAVITY) USED IN DOMESTIC PRODUCTION OF FUELS AND WAX. THE CRUDE YIELDS A SIGNIFICANT PORTION OF THE RAW MATERIAL USED IN THE BARRANCABERMEJA WAX FACTORY. UNTIL IMPORTED RAW MATERIAL IS AVAILABLE, THE FACTORY COULD EXPERIENCE SHORTAGES RESULTING IN LABOR PROBLEMS.

COMMENT

5. THIS IS THE FIRST TIME THAT THE ELN HAS ATTACKED
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PETROLEUM INFRASTRUCTURE NOT ASSOCIATED WITH THE CANO-LIMON FIELDS (OCCIDENTAL-SHELL-ECOPETROL OWNED AND OPERATED) IN ARAUCA. THIS LATEST ATTACK REPRESENTS AN ESCALATION OF ELN ATTACKS AGAINST PETROLEUM INFRASTRUCTURE. THE ELN NOW HAS CLEARLY DEMONSTRATED ITS ABILITY TO THREATEN ECONOMIC INFRASTRUCTURE IN DIVERSE REGIONS OF THE COUNTRY. THE ELN IS LIKELY TO CONTINUE TO ATTACK COLOMBIA'S SOFT, EASILY DESTROYED OIL RELATED FACILITIES.

6. ROJAS SAID THAT CHEVRON HAD HAD PROBLEMS IN THE PAST WITH POPULAR LIBERATION ARMY (EPL) GUERRILLAS, BUT NEVER WITH THE ELN. IN THE PAST THE EPL HAD DEMANDED A PAYMENT OF US 20 MILLION TO PERMIT CHEVRON TO CONTINUE

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OPERATIONS. CHEVRON DID NOT PAY. CHEVRON HAS
OPERATIONS IN OTHER PARTS OF COLOMBIA, INCLUDING A FIELD
IN THE LLANOS, AND EXPLORATORY FIELDS IN ARAUCA. ROJAS
DOES NOT BELIEVE THEM TO BE IN DANGER AT THIS TIME.
ROJAS SAID THAT THE ATTACKERS KNEW EXACTLY WHAT THEY
WERE DOING AND SUCCEEDED IN DESTROYING NOT ONLY
CHEVRON'S ABILITY TO TRANSPORT CRUDE, BUT ITS ABILITY TO
GET IT OUT OF THE GROUND. SKOL

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